

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-2

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Desai Describes as 'Mad' Hersh's Report of CIA Tie

NEW DELHI, June 2 (UPI)—Indian ex-prime minister Morarji Desai today denounced as "sheer mad" a report that he was on the CIA payroll while a member of the Indian Cabinet during the 1960s.

The charge was made in "The Price of Power," by Seymour M. Hersh. "It is a sheer mad story. If I were in America I would have sued him for \$1 million to teach him a lesson. I am not interested in the money," Desai said.

Asked what could be the basis of the report, Desai, 87, told reporters, "Madness is the basis, what else . . . Do you believe the story . . . ?"

Hersh, quoting anonymous officials, wrote, "I have been able to establish firmly that Desai was reporting [to the CIA] through 1970." He quotes former American intelligence officials as saying Desai "was a star performer who was paid \$20,000 a year" beginning in the Johnson administration and continuing into the Nixon years.

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